GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3678
ANSWERED ON:16.08.2000
EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES TO FOREIGN STUDENTS
ALE NARENDRA

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have worked out a comprehensive plan to expand, strengthen and restructure the present scheme for providing educational opportunities and scholarships to foreign students from neighbouring/developing countries as part of the strategy to strengthen friendly relationship through ICCR;

(b) if so, the details thereof ;

(c) the funds earmarked for the implementation of the plan;

(d) whether the performance of the scheme is reviewed from time to time; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA)

(a) & (b) The Government offers a number of scholarship schemes to foreign students, particularly from the developing countries with special emphasis on our neighbours, as an important instrument of its foreign policy objective to enhance mutual understanding and strengthen friendly relations with countries. While the administration of the scheme is constantly under review and tuition fees and other allowances like stipend and house rent allowance have been revised recently to strengthen the scheme, there is no plan presently to expand the scheme largely due to overall financial constraints. Even for the maintenance of the schemes at its existing levels the budget has been increased by 45.1% in the last three years. A list of important schemes administered by the ICCR are as follows:

1. General Cultural Scholarship Scheme : 180 scholarships are offered under this scheme primarily for nationals from developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

2. Cultural Exchange Programme: The ICCR administers approximately 450 scholarships under the Government of India`s bilateral Cultural Exchange Programmes with various countries.

3. Commonwealth Fellowship Plan : 70 scholarships are offered annually under this scheme for nationalsfrom Commonwealth countries.

4. Scholarship Schemes for Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Mauritius : 177 scholarships are offered annually; 100 for Bangladesh, 47 for Sri Lanka and 30 for Mauritius.

5. Craft Instructors Scheme : 10 bursaries are offered annually to nationals of Commonwealth countries for training as craft instructors.

6. ICCR Scholarship Scheme : 60 scholarships are offered for studies in Indian classical dance, painting and sculpture.

7. Reciprocal Scholarships Scheme : 25 scholarships ar offered annually on a reciprocal basis for Latin American countries and to certain specified European countries.

8. Technical Cooperation Scheme of the Colombo Plan : 130 scholarships are administered under this scheme on behalf of the Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance and Ministry of External Affairs.These scholarships are meant for Asian countries.

9. SAARC Fellowship Scheme : 6 fellowships and 12 scholarships are offered annually to scholars from SAARC countries under the scheme. One Chair is also offered on a rotation basis among SAARC member countries.

(c) Rs.10.52 crores are earmarked from the ICCR`s annual budget for scholarships to foreign scholars.In addition Rs.4.50 crores are disbursed on behalf of Ministries such as Ministry of Finance and Ministry of External Affairs for scholarships schemes administered on their behalf by the ICCR.

(d) & (e) All aspects of the various scholarhsip schemes such as geographical regions of priority, areas of studies and terms of

scholarships are kept under constant review by the statutory bodies of ICCR and the Government of India.